

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

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SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10 ACDA-05 /089 W

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R 130827Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4877

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SANA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 7025

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINS PINT ET SA

SUBJECT: ALI MIRAH, THE DIRG AND THE AFAR

REFS: (A) ADDIS 6995 AND PREVIOUS; (B) ADDIS A-86

1. WE UNDERSTAND THAT AFAR SULTAN ALI MIRAH HANFERE HAS DEPARTED THE FRENCH TERRITORY OF AFARS AND ISSAS (TFAI) AND IS NOW IN SAUDI ARABIA. IT IS NOT CLEAR TO OUR SOURCES WHAT HE INTENDS TO DO NEXT. ALTHOUGH THE FRENCH ARE UNDERSTANDABLY KEEPING PUBLICLY QUIET ABOUT IT, THEY HAVE TOLD US IN CONFIDENCE THAT ONE OF ALI MIRAH'S SONS (NAME UNSPECIFIED) HAS COME INTO TFAI. WE ASSUME THAT HE WILL ATTEMPT TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE SITUATION FOR HIS FATHER FROM THERE.

2. THE FRENCH, WHO HAVE THE BEST SOURCES IN THAT PART OF ETHIOPIA DUE TO THEIR SIZABLE PRESENCE IN DIRE DAWA AND THEIR ROLE IN OPERATING THE FRANCO-ETHIOPIAN RAILWAY, HAVE SHARED WITH US THE CONFIDENTIAL

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FOLLOWING INFORMATION AND ESTIMATES OF THE SITUATION TO WHICH WE

INCLINED GIVE CREDENCE, THOUGH WE HAVE YET TO RECEIVE COLLATERAL FOR THEM:

A) ETHIOPIAN REGULARS NOW HAVE THE SITUATION IN THE LOWER AWASH BASIN IN HAND. THIS MEANS THAT THEY HAVE CONTROL OF ALL MAJOR LOCALITIES AND OF THE ASSAB ROAD SUFFICIENT TO KEEP THAT ROAD OPEN TO PRIORITY (ESCORTED) TRAFFIC.

B) THERE HAS BEEN NO INTERFERENCE WITH THE RAILWAY TO DATE. THAT RAILWAY RUNS THROUGH TERRITORY DOMINATED BY ISSAS (TRADITIONAL ENEMIES OF THE AFAR) AS IT APPROACHES TFAI. MOREOVER, WHERE IT TRAVERSES AFAR COUNTRY IT CROSSES LAND UNDER THE CONTROL OF AN AFAR CLAN NOT RPT NOT PARTICULARLY RESPONSIVE TO ALI MIRAH, THE (OUSTED) AFAR SULTAN.

C) THE DIRG IS SEEKING TO SPLIT THE AFAR AWAY FROM ALI MIRAH HANFERE. THEY ARE PUSHING A PRETENDER TO AFAR LEADERSHIP FROM THE YAYO CLAN (CF REF B, ATTACHMENT A). WE THINK THIS LIKELY WILL PROVE TO BE MOHAMED YAYO. ACCORDING TO THE FRENCH, THE DIRG IS HAVING SOME IMPACT IN THIS EFFORT, AND THE FRENCH EMBASSY HERE HAS RECEIVED REPORTS OF SOME INCIPIENT INTRA-AFAR CLASHES BETWEEN PARTISANS OF ALI MIRAH AND THOSE OF THE DIRG CLIENT. FOR OUR PART, WE ESTIMATE THAT SOME TIME WILL BE REQUIRED BEFORE A REASONABLE ASSESSMENT OF (MOHAMED) YAYO'S CHANCES FOR ACCEPTANCE CAN BE VENTURED.

D) BOTH WE AND THE FRENCH HAVE PICKED UP RUMORS IN TOWN ALLEGING THAT ONE OF ALI MIRAH'S SONS HAS TURNED ON HIS FATHER AND IS COOPERATING WITH THE DIRG. NEITHER WE NOR THE FRENCH HAVE ANY COLLATERAL ON THAT POINT.

E) GOVERNMENT CASUALTIES RESULTING FROM THE AFAR CLASHES HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY HEAVY. THE FRENCH ESTIMATE THAT SEVERAL HUNDRED MEN HAVE BEEN KILLED AND WOUNDED. SOLDIERS SENT TO ADDIS HOSPITALS FOR TREATMENT THE LAST FEW DAYS HAVE HAD TO BE DIVERTED TO DIRE DAWA BECAUSE ADDIS MILITARY MEDICAL FACILITIES WERE FULL UP. REGRETTABLY, TRADITIONAL PRACTICES HAVE RESULTED IN MANY CASES OF CASTRATION AND LITTLE CAN BE DONE FOR MEN WITH SUCH WOUNDS IN THIS COUNTRY.

3. COMMENT: AS THE DEPARTMENT IS WELL AWARE, MANY VARIABLES CAN IMPINGE ON THIS SITUATION. THESE WOULD INCLUDE THE AVAILABILITY OF ARAB RESOURCES TO THE AFAR AND WHETHER OR NOT SUCH RESOURCES, IF MADE AVAILABLE, ARE CHANNELED THROUGH ALI MIRAH; DIRG SUCCESS/FAILURE IN PUSHING THEIR YAYO CANDIDATE; THE NEW SITUATION  
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OF ALI AREF BOURHAN IN THE TFAI CREATED BY ALI MIRAH'S FLIGHT;  
FRENCH PERCEPTIONS OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE SITUATION UPON  
THEM; THE POTENTIAL FOR AFAR COOPERATION WITH THE ELF/PLF;  
ANY SOMALI MOVES.  
WYMAN

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## Message Attributes

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